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HEALTH COMMISSIONER APPLAUDS NATIONWIDE VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL OF LUCAS LIMON FROM U.S. MARKET SHELVES

Potentially dangerous lead levels found in Mexican candy

City of Milwaukee Health Commissioner Bevan K. Baker, CHE today applauded the nationwide voluntary withdrawal of four LUCAS® products, including Lucas Limon, from the U.S. market, effective August 7, 2004. On July 30th, Baker had issued an order to remove Lucas Limon from Milwaukee retail grocery stores, based on City of Milwaukee Health Department laboratory test results that found the brand to contain as much as .85 ppm (parts per million) of lead, which is above the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) guidance of .5 ppm for candy. LUCAS® also withdrew its Lucas Limon con Chile, Lucas Acidito, and Super Lucas Seasoning products pending further investigation.

“The City of Milwaukee Health Department is pleased that LUCAS® has taken this course of action,” said Commissioner Baker. “As public health partners, we will continue to work closely with the FDA, the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection, LUCAS® scientists, and the community as we test and re-test this product for high lead levels. Preventing lead poisoning in our children, including all significant sources of lead ingestion and exposure, remains one of our department’s top priorities, and we will continue with our proactive approach to educate our citizens so they may protect themselves against this health hazard.”

There are often no signs or symptoms of lead poisoning; testing is the only way to tell if your child is being affected by lead. Even small amounts of lead can be dangerous, especially to children who may already have high blood lead levels due to exposure to lead-based paint, which remains the major source of exposure. The City of Milwaukee Health Department recommends that all children be tested three times before age three at around 12, 18 and 24 months of age. For more information about lead poisoning, please visit the City of Milwaukee Health Department’s Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention website at www.milwaukee.gov/health or call the department at 414.225.LEAD (5323).

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